

ARTICLE 29: RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY BYLAW

The Six Elements of the Proposed Bylaw and the Value they Add to Existing Regulations

- 1. Registration:** Lets everyone know who the responsible parties are for all rentals properties.
- 2. Self-certification of property condition:** Lets landlords know their responsibilities about meeting specific existing health and safety standards, and attest to the fact that they have self-inspected the property and those standards are met. Lets tenants know what they have a right to expect and what has been represented regarding their home.
- 3. Provision of property upkeep and behavior bylaws to tenants:** Town provides info to landlords, and landlords attest to understanding it and providing it to their tenants. Makes clear to landlords and tenants what the existing laws are, and helps everyone understand the expectations to help prevent anyone from getting in trouble for breaking laws about which they were not aware.
- 4. Parking plan:** Provides clarity and protection for all stakeholders about where parking is and is not allowed.
- 5. Annual registration fee:** Small fee – amount to be determined by the Select Board -- allows for an additional code enforcement officer to address property complaints and an administrative assistant who will process and keep current the registration and permit information and make it all accessible to everyone on the Town's web site, along with electronic complaint submission and follow-up tracking. The availability of this information will be a great resource and protection to tenants, parents of student tenants, and neighbors.
- 6. Permit:** If the previous 5 elements are satisfied, a permit is issued. The potential for suspension of a permit provides all stakeholders with a new protection against an egregiously uncooperative landlord who is making no effort, or is actively obstructing efforts, to bring his or her property into compliance with existing codes and bylaws or the approved parking plan.

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Benefits & Protections for All Stakeholders

For Tenants

- Knowing how landlord represented conditions of their home to the Town; if not accurate, can follow-up with the Town to ensure that conditions are brought up to code
- Clarity on the property, parking and behavior regulations that they might otherwise inadvertently violate
- Landlords needing to make good-faith efforts to keep property in compliance with health and safety regulations, lest the landlord risk a permit suspension; and any permit suspension would be deferred until end of tenants' lease periods
- Additional Code Enforcement Officer to handle their complaints

For Parents/Guardians of Student Renters:

- Knowing how landlord represented conditions of their student's home to the Town; if not accurate, can follow-up with the Town to ensure that conditions are brought up to code
- Clarity on the property, parking and behavior regulations their student is expected to follow
- Having contact information for the owner/manager of the property available on the Town web site, should it be needed

For Landlords:

- Clarity of what Town expects for safe and healthy compliance
- Having Town be partner in educating tenants about property and behavior regulations
- Level playing field: all rental properties being held to same standards, making it more difficult for less-responsible landlords to profit at the expense of more-responsible landlords
- Ability to appeal permit suspension to Rental Appeals Board

For Neighbors:

- Having contact information for the owner/manager of the property available on the Town web site, should it be needed
- Having rental neighbors more educated about property and behavior regulations
- Being able to check parking plan online to if they have concerns about a parking situation
- Increased enforcement through addition of second Code Enforcement Officer

For Code Enforcement Officials

- Clarity of all laws and expectations among landlords and tenants up front = all on the same page
- Easy access to contact information for the ownership/management of all properties
- Additional resources to improve complaint follow-up and enforcement efforts